

28 April 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM : Robert R. Bowie
Deputy to the DCI for National Intelligence

SUBJECT : Your Interest in Dinner Discussion Groups

1. Action Required: None; for information only.
2. After mulling over your idea of organizing occasional dinner and discussion groups, and obtaining valuable suggestions from the NIOs, the IC Staff, and the DDI, I would like to offer the following thoughts.
3. Objectives. I am assuming that the meetings are intended to serve several purposes:
 - ° To encourage the Community to participate more openly and actively in responsible, informed debate on issues of national importance;
 - ° to improve the quality as well as the scope of our communication with "the outside," including academe, the Congress and the press, by sharing some of our more interesting views and findings;
 - ° to benefit from the intellectual stimulation and insights to be derived from such communication; and
 - ° to demonstrate the qualities of knowledgeability, relevance, analytic excellence and objectivity in our work, and thus to improve our public image.
4. If these are the objectives to be served, we shall have to consider carefully what format or structure we want for the meetings, the kinds of topics that would be suitable, and the number and mix of participants that would make for a productive discussion.
5. Two Approaches. As I see it, there are two quite different approaches to such meetings; both may be worthwhile, but the differences between them should not become blurred:

- ° A small, unstructured, informal meeting, put together on relatively short notice, built around the availability of a distinguished individual who could provide us with stimulation, an unusual viewpoint or an exploration of a novel issue or a topical subject of concern to us.
- ° A larger, more structured, seminar-type meeting, with agenda and papers, all well planned in advance, around a subject area in which we are deeply engaged or planning to become engaged, or where exposure of our work to outside expertise could be mutually beneficial.

6. Format, Topics, People. The social aspects of the meetings could be the same for both approaches--participants would assemble in the DCI's dining area for drinks and dinner, and would then adjourn to the DCI Conference Room for after-dinner discussion. In all other respects, the two approaches would be different.

7. The small, informal discussions would have a guest list of perhaps 10-12 persons -- some combination of academic, policy level and intelligence-analytic talent. The featured guest might lead off with a theme, and the discussion could then flow freely. I gather that some former DCIs (McCone, Colby, Bush) did on occasion host such informal dinners with good results. The occasion would often simply be the presence in Washington of some interesting person visiting here on other business. The choice of topics and the mix of attendees for such meetings could thus fall out logically from the choice of person. For example, if Robert McNamara were available, we might ask him to address the question of the role of multi-lateral lending as a North-South issue. Participants might be drawn from such administration luminaries as Dick Cooper and Julius Katz at State, Tony Solomon and Fred Bergsten at Treasury, Roger Hansen at NSC; a sprinkling of academic talent, say, a financial policy expert (e.g., Joe Pechman at Brookings), someone concerned about the LDC economic plight (e.g., Charlie Kindleberger at MIT) and a monetary economist (e.g., Wilson Schmidt at VPI); a journalist (e.g., Hobart Rowen of the Post); and some of our more articulate in-house political-economic talent, such as Maurice Ernst, Allen Goodman, Dave Overton, etc. For such informal sessions, clearly, there would be no dearth of interesting people and topics. Some examples:

- ° Walter Levy (private consultant) -- The Petroleum Industry Under Siege.

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- ° Jorge Dominquez (Harvard) -- Castro's Perspective on US-Cuban Relations.
- ° Wolfgang Panofsky (Stanford) -- Is There a Future for Nuclear Power?
- ° Thomas Hughes (Carnegie Foundation) -- The Nexus between Intelligence and Policymaking.
- ° Chester Crocker (Georgetown) -- Whither Apartheid in South Africa?
- ° Murray Mitchell (NOAA)
° Stephen Schneider (Colorado) -- How Predictable is Weather?

In some cases, the keynoter might also be asked to address a larger audience in the auditorium.

8. The larger seminar-type meetings would require more substantial preparation and a longer lead-time, since they would aim not simply at stimulation and exploration, but would seek a serious contribution to, or critique of, our ongoing work. Such meetings would be more in the nature of a mini-conference, with a prepared paper or papers circulated in advance, and a careful selection of invited experts to offer comments on or reactions to our work. Alternatively, this format could also be used to explore with various agencies or individuals the feasibility or desirability of some new Community initiative. The guest list for such meetings could be substantially larger, say, as many as 20 participants and perhaps a few additional observers. As regards topics, the following three examples might illustrate the kinds of issues that would be suitable for this format (culled from a much larger list of candidates proposed by NIOs and DDI elements):

- ° "Political-Economic Repercussions of the Soviet Petroleum Shortfall" --

CIA's recent projections of Soviet oil production to the 80s raises fundamentally important questions about the Soviet leadership's ability to sustain its present pattern of resource allocation. From what sector or sectors can the leadership draw the large investment resources it will require to avoid unacceptable energy and balance of payments deficits five-to-ten years hence? To what extent are these resources in fact fungible? How will the Soviet power position be affected? How will the leadership meet its vital commodity supply commitments to Eastern Europe? Its technology import requirements to foster productivity

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growth? etc. A well-structured, serious discussion of these questions could be stimulating and productive at this time. A thematic paper on the subject could be drawn from CIA's ongoing study on the Soviet economy and an interesting mix of participants could be assembled on this topic. It would include Soviet energy specialists (Bob Campbell, Indiana), Soviet economists (Abe Bergson, Harvard), general economists (Laurie Klein, Pennsylvania; Fred Hoffman, RAND), policy level people (Bob Hormats, NSC; Harry Berghold, Assistant to Schlesinger; Fred Bergsten, Treasury; Steve Bosworth, State; Bill Nordhaus, CEA), Congressional staff (John Koehler, Congressional Budget Office; John Hardt, Congressional Research Service; Grenville Garside, Senator Jackson's Staff Director, etc.); an analytically-minded journalist (Bob Keatley, Wall Street Journal) and so forth.

- ° What Can the Intelligence Community Contribute (in Collection and Analysis) to the Study of the Food-and-Population Problem?"

The DDI has proposed "The World Food Problem" as an interesting dinner meeting topic (Ref: Hank Knoche's April 6 memo to you), including an excellent list of participants. In reconnoitering this topic further, however, it has become apparent that conferences on the food problem are currently very much in vogue, and that the topic as such is probably receiving as much attention as it deserves. It may be preferable, therefore, to focus the topic on the food-population nexus, and specifically on the intelligence role in the study of that nexus. There are divergent views in the governmental community as to whether we have a special contribution to make in this area, and an airing of these views would be instructive. Because of his intimate familiarity with every aspect of US agricultural policy, and his superb objectivity, we feel that D. Gale Johnson, Provost of the University of Chicago, would make an excellent chairman for such a meeting, which could be kept relatively small. The best time for the meeting would be in the fall, after the new team in Agriculture has had its first experience living with intelligence through a harvest cycle.

- ° US Government Support for a Soviet Research Institute"

This issue is now ripe for an action-oriented dinner meeting that would seek to develop a consensus within the National Security community as to our role in this

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venture. Much attention has been paid of late to the problems of academic research and training in the Soviet-East European field--the drying up of government and foundation financial support, the failure of the universities to replenish existing scholarship, the lack of an effective organized academic research contribution to the key issues of interest to government--all these have been extensively aired, most recently in an all-day session on the Hill, organized by Dave Abshire of the Georgetown Center, and chaired by Congressman Zablocki. There emerged from that session a clear need for an Executive Branch action group to work with the academics on the development of an institutional setting that will permit federal research funds, with Congressional blessing, to flow into this vital field on a sustained basis, and that will generate relevant research on a range of issues not now adequately addressed in our in-house analytic work. While there are wide differences of view on the precise details of such an institutional setting, the need for it and the kinds of output desired from it are widely endorsed. What would be very helpful now is an organized approach to the problem within the Executive Branch, particularly among its national security elements. To this end, a well-prepared small dinner meeting of the key players in State, Defense, CIA, and National Science Foundation (which has a strong interest and available funds) could kick-off such an approach. We would prepare an issues paper and participants would include (State) Tony Lake, Hal Saunders, Ray Platig; (Defense) Gene Fubini, Jerry Deneen, Andy Marshall and the new Under Secretary for Policy, yet to be named; (NSF) Tom Jones and Ed Grey.

9. The last of these three topics is probably the most immediately ready for scheduling, inasmuch as the issue is ripe, we are very actively involved, and NSF has some "seed capital" that it may be prepared to allocate to this effort quickly. We could probably schedule this session for late May.

10. If this whole approach meets with your approval, we could begin to develop a program of periodic dinner meetings along these lines, beginning with the Soviet research institute meeting in late May. Following this, we might schedule additional dinners on a trial basis at roughly one-month intervals.

11. This memorandum has been coordinated with the DDI and the IC Staff.

Robert R. Bowie

Concur:

Proceed as outlined: _____

Other comments: _____
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